

## Liberal Plan Frowned On By Harding

Bars 'Constitution Tinkering'; Resolution Ending 'Lame Ducks' and Electoral College Is Reported

## January Inaugural And Congress Urged

### Envoys of Bar and Labor Back Ashurst Measure to Suppress Hold-Overs

WASHINGTON, Dec. 8.—President Harding to-day allowed it to be known that he opposes the proposed change in the method of electing the President and Vice-President by abolishing the Electoral College. Nor does the President approve the proposed change in the time of meeting of the newly elected Congress, to make it convene soon after the elections.

While it was becoming known that the President is against these changes in the Constitution which are favored by the Progressive bloc, the Senate Committee on Agriculture was reporting out the substance of the resolution which would abolish the Electoral College and change the time of the Presidential election.

and of Senators and House members to begin in January, or much sooner after the elections than at present.

**Ashurst Resolution Favored**

Furthermore, a sub-committee of the Senate Judiciary Committee gave a hearing on the Ashurst resolution proposing to have the Constitution amended so the newly elected President, Vice-President and Congress would take office in January instead of March 4, as under the present arrangement. The Ashurst resolution is backed by the House Administration Committee and has powerful Senate support, which is not confined to the Progressives. The sub-

the full committee.  
Senator Norris said he would press his proposed amendment.  
The view of the President is that the Constitution does not need to be changed constantly nor tinkered with. He believes that one of the wisest decisions of the founders of the country

a year until after it was elected, thus giving time for sober thought on the measures to be considered. The President, Arthur C. Leary, said such a delay was unnecessary, for the reason the President can call an extra session when an emergency requires it.

**Dates Fixed in January**

The action of the Senate Committee on Agriculture came about as a result of the fact that Senator Caraway in the extra session introduced legislation requiring the sense of the Senate that "lame ducks" should not vote in Congress after election, except on routine matters. This was referred, at the request of Senator Caraway, to the Committee on Agriculture, of which Senator Norris is chairman.

resolution, came to the conclusion that it was not constitutional and then proceeded to substitute for it the proposal of Senator Norris to abolish the Electoral College, thus providing for election of President and Vice-President by direct vote and enabling independent nominees or candidates to get on the ticket without an elaborate

The Norris proposal also contemplates that the terms of the President and Vice-President shall begin at noon on the third Monday in January after election and the terms of Senators and Representatives shall begin the first Monday in January after election, instead of March 4.

Senator Norris reported the resolution and it went to the calendar. It is generally assumed nothing will come of it at this time. Its opponents say it should have come from the Judiciary Committee and that it ought to go there yet. Senator Norris indicated he

It is not improbable the opponents of the subsidy bill will discuss the proposed changes in the Constitution when the subsidy measure comes up.

He frankly says that his resolution is inspired by Senator Carawa's resolution to prevent "lame ducks" from voting. On the Caraway resolution, Senator Norris says:

"The passage of such a resolution

were complied with, it would interfere with the constitutional right and privilege of many members of Congress. Under our Constitution, a member's right, if not his duty, to participate fully in all legislation up to the close of his constitutional term cannot be questioned or denied.

"The resolution, however, does call attention to a very serious defect in some of the provisions of the Constitution. When our Constitution was adopted there was some reason for such a long intervention of time between the election and the actual commencement of work by the new Con-

telegraphic communication connecting the various states and communities of the country. Under present conditions the result of elections is known all over the country within a few hours after the polls close and the Capital within a few days' travel of the remotest portions of the country."

Amendment Senators have been elected by the people at the same time as members of the House are elected, so there can be no reason why they should not assume their new duties at the beginning of the new year following their election, the report asserts.

Senator Norris then said:

“The only direct opportunity the cit-

their ideas and their wishes in regard to national legislation is the expression of their will through the election of their representatives at the general election in November. During the campaign that precedes this election the great questions demanding attention at the hands of the new Congress are

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